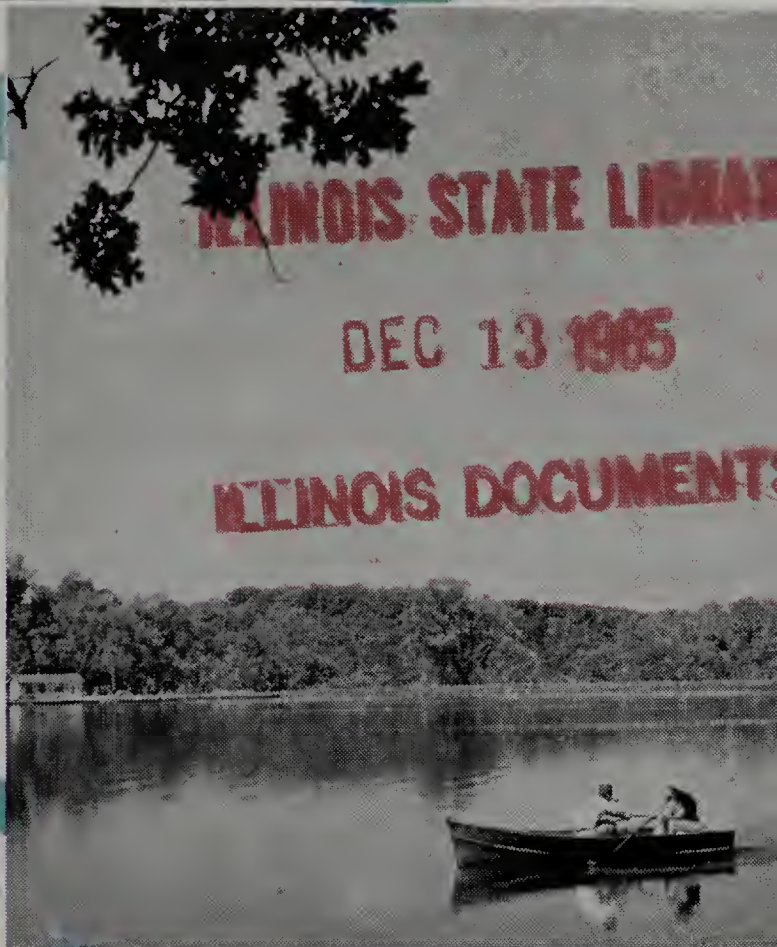


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BLAVER DAM

STATE
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State of Illinois

Beaver Dam State Park

About half way between Springfield and St. Louis is Beaver Dam State Park of 425 acres, of which 59 acres is lake. This is one of the most beautiful unspoiled natural areas in the state.

The park is reached by driving over a good blacktop road that winds up and down around a well wooded section interspersed by good farms and orchards, and is about seven miles south of Carlinville.

No one knows how long there has been a lake here. Possibly it goes back to the time of the Indians. Others believe it is about a century old.

Form Beaver Dam Lake Club

The small lake became well known as a fishing spot in the early 1890's, and 18 men from Carlinville formed the Beaver Dam Lake Club, named after the beaver who originally made the lake. They spent about \$2,500 to build

BEAVER DAM STATE PARK

CARLINVILLE 7 MILES

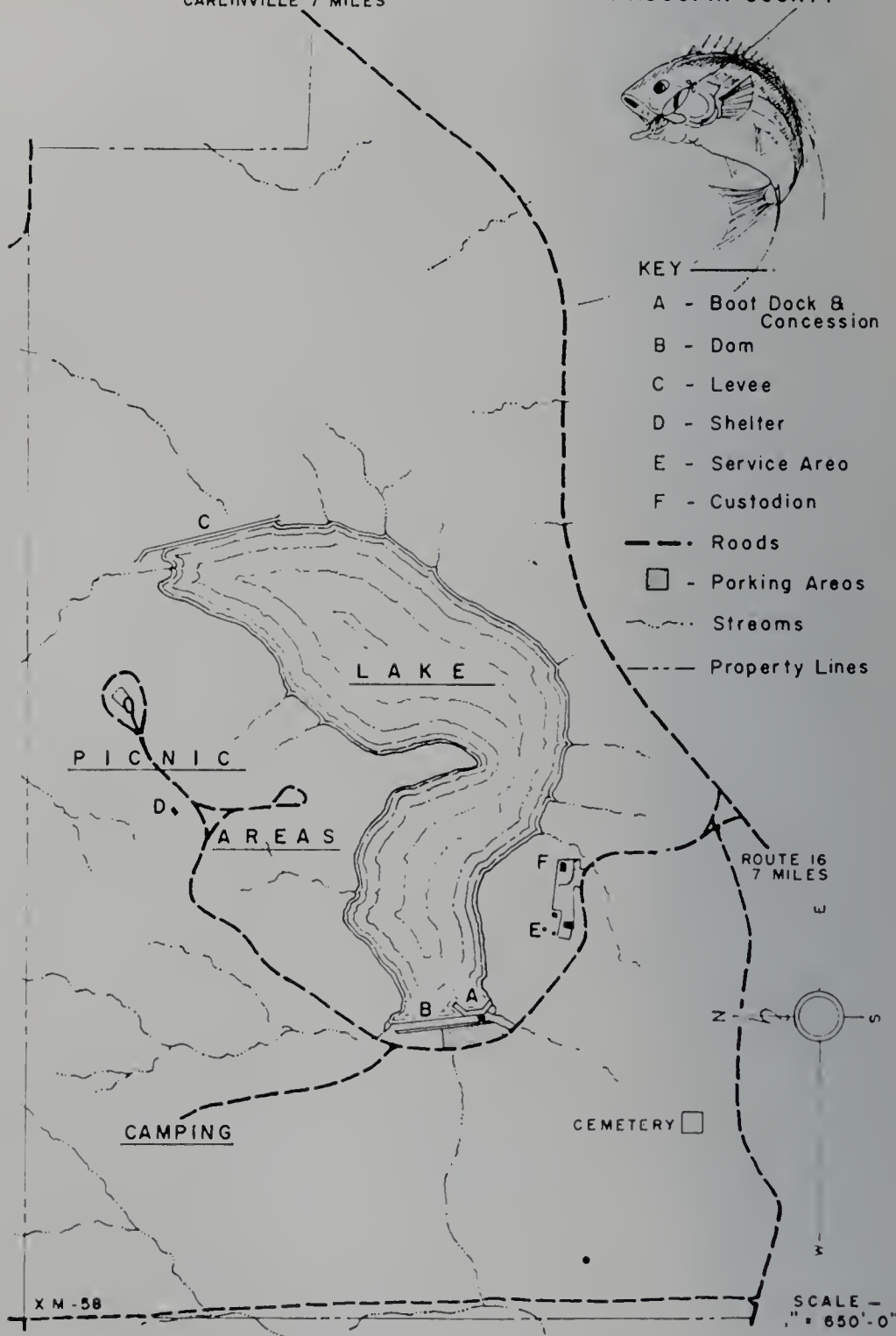
MACOUPIN COUNTY



KEY

- A - Boat Dock & Concession
- B - Dam
- C - Levee
- D - Shelter
- E - Service Area
- F - Custodian

- Roads
- - Parking Areas
- Streams
- Property Lines





Aerial View of Beaver Dam

a dam at each end of lake, and doubled the depth of the water to about eight feet.

For a number of years the club held a summer and fall picnic at the lake, and their families and friends enjoyed fishing and boating throughout the season.

The area then became the property of the family of Mrs. Sarah Rhodes who, for some time, operated a small hotel which stood on the site of the present custodian's residence. There were 16 bedrooms for guests.

Horse-drawn Coach for Visitors

Up the road, half a mile from this site, is Macoupin Station. At one time it had not just one general store, but a cluster of houses and a railroad station. Trains stopping here were met by a large horse-drawn coach which took guests to the hotel. A few sturdier visitors camped in the beautiful woods surrounding the lake, but Mrs. Rhodes

Boat Docks Easily Accessible



drew the line on women campers. With the advent of the automobile, this transit business disappeared and the hotel was closed.

When the General Assembly visualized a state-wide system of lakes, this was one of the first acquired. With six other lake areas, it was put under the jurisdiction of the Division of Parks and Memorials by legislative action in 1955. Before this time, the Division of Fisheries of the Department of Conservation, had enlarged and improved the lake, and did much of the park development work.

Good Fishing Possibilities Ahead

Over the years the lake has been planted to game fish, and species present are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear



Shaded Areas for Picnickers

sunfish and channel catfish. A fish population analysis after rehabilitation work on the lake indicates good sport fishing developing. Anglers should continue to experience good catches. In past years Beaver Dam has afforded especially good bluegill fishing, and evidence again suggests that the lake will mature into a fine pan fish area.

Beaver Dam is unique in that it has two dams and lies on a ridge which formerly divided the flow of the springs presently feeding the lake between the watershed contributory to Macoupin and Hurricane Creeks. Owing to some phenomenon of nature, a saddle which formed good banks for two sides of the lake had been formed in the ridge. A colony of beaver, taking advantage of the help afforded by nature, constructed a dam across Macoupin Creek to the west of the ridge and created a lake ideally suited to their use.

Since then man has improved greatly upon the work of the beaver by the use of concrete, stone and steel, and today this park has an excellent 59 acre lake.

Park Is Monument to Beaver

While the beaver have been gone from here for many years, it is, however, a monument to our most talented animal. Its dam is perhaps the most famous of animal undertakings.

The beaver dam, such as originally created this lake, is a complicated structure of sticks, stones, roots, mud, and sod. Sometimes these dams are quite large, some being over 500 feet in length.

Indians and pioneer whites found the beaver excellent eating, but the trade in their skins is what brought the white man into the state. The French had particular talents in dealing with the Indians who welcomed the opportunity to trade beaver skins for guns and other niceties of another culture. The pressure of civilization, and the beaver hat going out of style, ended much of the trade.



Lake Rehabilitation by Chemicals

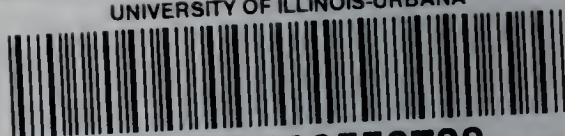
Reintroduce Beaver in 1912

After 1912, no beaver were reported in Illinois until 1929, when they were reintroduced. Today they are found statewide, and in many places have become a nuisance. They damage crops (they love corn), flood farm lands, stop drains and cut off roads. In 1951 an open season on beaver trapping was opened and runs six weeks each year.

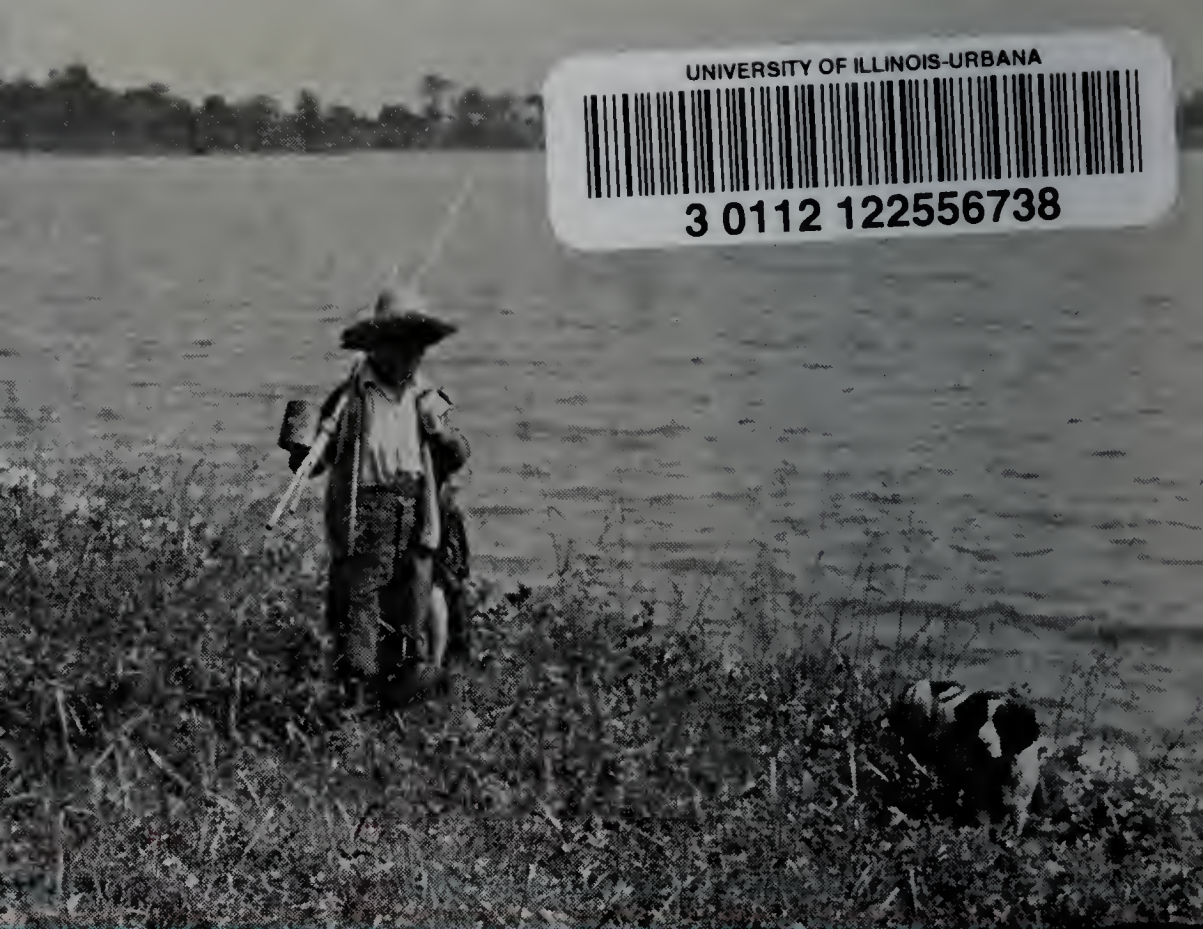
The marginal land surrounding the lake remains largely in a primitive wooded state in which grow large oaks, elms, hickories, and other native trees.

State Provides Boat Docks

A concession stand is near the dam, and there is a boat dock where State owned boats may be rented and private boats docked. A good rock road winds around to the far side of the lake where there are picnic areas, and good spots for the pole and line fisherman. For the overnight camper, there is an excellent new camping area. For the use of camping sites, permits must be obtained from the Park Custodian.



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Boy + Cane Poles + Worms = Fish

Write to the Division of Parks and Memorials, 100 State Office Building, Springfield, for further information concerning Illinois Parks and Memorials.

Our numerous State Parks and Memorials are of easy access from every part of the State. Lodges and cabins are an important feature of Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest and Giant City State Parks. Reservations should be made with lodge managers.

(All State Parks Open the Year Around)

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Inviting Water Awaits Visitors



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